

UServeUtah Strategic Plan

2014-2016



UServeUtah

Utah Commission on Service & Volunteerism

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2014-2016 STRATEGIC PLAN / STATE SERVICE PLAN

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

About the Commission

UServeUtah, the Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism, was created by state statute in 1994 and is comprised of 20 members representing local government; community based organizations and statewide networks as well as 5 staff. As the state's central coordinating body for service and volunteerism, the Commission is responsible for developing, implementing, and sustaining a vision and culture of civic engagement and national and community service within the state.

Since its inception in 1994, UServeUtah has focused on increasing the capacity of organizations to serve, strengthen and transform communities through service and volunteerism. It furthers its mission by: promoting volunteerism, administering National Service programs, connecting people with opportunities to serve, building organizational capacity for effective volunteer engagement, and participating in strategic initiatives that mobilize volunteers to meet local needs.

Fundamentals

The **purpose** of UServeUtah, the Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism is to enable individuals, communities, and organizations in Utah to benefit from the service, power, skills, and passion of volunteers.

Our **mission** is to strengthen Utah communities through the power of service and volunteerism.

Our **vision** is to have vibrant productive communities with active engaged citizens.

Our work is based in these core **values**:

- We believe that volunteerism is a uniquely American form of civic engagement that is fundamental to our democracy and critical to our communities.
- We believe volunteers build strong communities and have a lasting impact on local needs.
- Utah volunteers are exceptional. They are willing to make the time, and the connections that come from reaching out in service to and with others.
- We know that volunteers are bedrock in any community. Neighborhoods where volunteers gather and serve are more vibrant, safe, and engaged.
- Volunteering collectively grows bonds across various experiences, beliefs, backgrounds and barriers.
- People who volunteer feel a unique sense of ownership and responsibility and are in turn transformed by the experience.

UServeUtah has a long history of advocating the value of volunteerism, training skilled volunteers, coordinating a statewide system to facilitate service, developing innovative AmeriCorps programs, and promoting Utah's national leadership in volunteerism. Our **competitive advantages** include:

- *We offer state leadership.* As a branch of the state government and a program of the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, we can use our bully pulpit to promote volunteerism with authority.
- *We collaborate.* We have years of experience working in the public and private sectors to focus resources on volunteerism.
- *We have data.* Our studies measure the impact volunteers have on our lives and our communities.
- *We have expertise.* Our training to volunteer organizations helps them better use and support volunteers
- *We bring resources to the table.* Our nationally-recognized AmeriCorps programs connect local needs with manpower in a cost effective and efficient way.

To achieve our mission the UServeUtah concentrates efforts in three focus areas; **National Service, Community Engagement and Disaster Service.**

National Service

AmeriCorps, the Domestic Peace Corps, annually engages more than 80,000 Americans nationwide in intensive, results-driven service in the areas of education, public safety, health and the environment.

UServeUtah manages the Utah AmeriCorps*State program portfolio comprising programs that target underserved and needy populations in the areas of: Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Disaster Preparedness, Healthy Futures and Veterans and Military Families.

UServeUtah administers all Utah AmeriCorps*State grants and provides administrative, fiscal and programmatic oversight, technical assistance and program development in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

Community Engagement

UServeUtah seeks to build and cultivate capacity in the volunteer and service community through collaboration, consensus and the concept of collective impact. UServeUtah functions as consultant, and training resource to expand public/private partnerships and volunteer mobilization capacity.

UServeUtah recognizes outstanding volunteers across the state through the annual Volunteer Achievement Awards, as well as support of statewide volunteer recognition programs.

UServeUtah, through community engagement efforts, sponsors National Service Days in Utah, including Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, Global Youth Service Day and 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance.

Disaster Service

Volunteers can be essential in helping to rebuild lives and rebuild communities after a disaster. It is important that volunteers are given meaningful and constructive opportunities to serve, while not overwhelming the affected community during the response and recovery. UServeUtah seeks to help local communities plan for coordination of spontaneous and unaffiliated volunteers during disaster recovery efforts.

In the event of a disaster, UServeUtah serves on the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) and is the lead in coordinating volunteer and donations management. UServeUtah also acts as the liaison with the Corporation for National and Community Service to call upon National Service resources such as AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) and FEMA Corps members for on-ground support

NATIONAL SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERISM IN UTAH AT PRESENT

AmeriCorps

Since 1994, more than 12,000 Utahns have participated in the AmeriCorps programs, dedicating 7.4 million hours to building up communities across the state. In 2013 Utah AmeriCorps programs which operated throughout the state with 1,543 AmeriCorps members. These members mobilized more than 45,000 volunteers who tutored and mentored youth, connected underserved populations to health care resources, cleaned and tended parks and streams, taught environmental stewardship, and operated after school programs. These volunteers gave over 266,067 hours of service with an estimated value of over \$4.8 million dollars.

Volunteerism

The most recent *Volunteering in America* research ranks Utah as the #1 state for volunteerism in the nation – **For 8 years in a row!** Currently 47.7 % of adults (970,000) volunteer annually, contributing 166 million hours of service valued at \$3 billion. This equates to 81.4 hours rendered annually per Utah resident. An additional 76.7 % of adults (1.5 million) volunteered informally rather than serving with an organization.

Volunteerism is truly one of Utah's greatest assets and is a significant natural resource that contributes to our economic strength and vibrant communities.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Process

This Strategic Plan builds on the work of the 2010-2012 Strategic Plan/State Service Plan, drafted by the Utah Commission on Volunteers and staff in 2009. This plan was developed through an open and public process that provided for maximum participation and input from key stakeholders across the state. Surveys were conducted by UServeUtah to a network which included; Commissioners, government agencies, educational institutions, volunteer connector organizations, and national service programs.

The strategic direction and goals included in this plan are a response to the understanding of what these stakeholders value most about UServeUtah, and current opportunities and challenges for offering a high quality system of support in the community for service and volunteerism. The process of developing this plan has provided an opportunity for assessing and deepening UServeUtah approaches to its work.

This 3-year plan is the roadmap to building systems that harness and focus our unique and invaluable resource – the cultural ethic of service and volunteerism that exists among Utah citizens. The plan lays out a comprehensive framework based on guiding objectives with strategies and specific activities outlined. Updated annually, this plan will be reviewed and revised for 2015 and again in 2016.

With a fresh perspective on our mission, understanding what we do well, and the environment in which we operate, UServeUtah will pursue the following strategic direction. Strategies, activities and performance measures are consolidated under three Commission objectives listed below.

Objective #1 **Build and cultivate** capacity in the volunteer and service community.

A primary aim of UServeUtah is to help organizations effectively use service & volunteerism as a strategy to fulfill their mission and to address critical community problems.

Objective #2 **Promote and inspire** statewide National Service and volunteerism

Utah has a culture of volunteerism, but individuals need to be made aware of needs and occasions to serve. UServeUtah is committed to creating ways for Utahns to identify and engage in quality volunteer and service opportunities.

Objective #3 **Recognize** the effort of outstanding volunteers.

As our values state, Utahns are exceptional, they are willing to make the time, and the connections that come from reaching out in service to and with others. We are dedicated to recognizing and acknowledging individuals for their volunteer efforts.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Objective 1: Build and Cultivate Capacity in the Volunteer and Service Community

A primary aim of the Commission is to help organizations effectively use service & volunteerism as a strategy to fulfil their mission and to address critical community problems

Strategy: *Training*

Provide successful statewide trainings that will ensure organizations are prepared to use volunteers effectively and meeting all Federal programmatic requirements related to grants received

Activity: CE

Volunteer Management Train the Trainer certification course provided twice a year

Outcome:

Develop capacity of organizations to provide appropriate and consistent volunteer management training

Measurement:

Number of Trainer Certificates distributed

Target: 60 Certificates

Survey of organizations on additional T/TA provided to community organizations

Target: 75% using the tools provided

Activity: NS

Develop and implement training plan for AmeriCorps program that addresses program needs and federal compliance requirements. Annually one cross stream training will be held

Outcomes:

Networking and collaboration among all National Service programs within state
Federally compliant programs

Measurement:

Satisfaction survey of programs involved in training

Target: 90% of programs reporting that training is useful to program operation

Target: 80% of cross stream participants reporting satisfactory results

Decrease in compliance issues

Target: 100% of programs successfully addressing corrective actions

Activity: DS

Develop and implement local trainings to increase the number of local communities prepared with tools for managing spontaneous volunteers in a disaster

Outcome:

Communities across the state are prepared to activate Volunteer Reception/Coordination Centers locally in the event of an emergency or disaster

Measurement:

Number of spontaneous volunteer management training (SVM) events provided

Target: 3 annually

Number of communities with a plan developed and submitted to UServeUtah

Target: 15 communities

Activity: DS

Develop and implement additional strategies related to spontaneous volunteer management that focus on information dissemination, outreach and practical hands on efforts to reinforce and exercise classroom learning

Outcome:

Increase best practices at local level related to spontaneous volunteer management

Disseminate best practices from state VDCT standard operating procedures to local level

Measurement:

Survey of local communities regarding satisfaction with UServeUtah SVM products and services

Target: 75% expressing satisfaction

Number of communities that exercise spontaneous volunteer management on an annual basis

Target: 15 communities

Strategy: Resources

Expand the reach of UServeUtah resources through targeting gaps in programming

Activity: CE

Regional Volunteer Management Training Grants provided to organizations

Outcome:

Effective and impactful use of volunteers to address community needs

Measurement:

Number of organizations trained

Target: 80

Demonstration of increase in knowledge through pre/post testing

Target: 80% of participants show increase in knowledge

Survey of participants on usefulness of training

Target: 85% reporting implementation of effective volunteer management practices

Activity: NS

Determine programming gaps related to CNCS determined focus areas and develop unique strategies to resolve gaps in service

Outcomes:

Select and fund National Service/AmeriCorps programs that focus on delivery to target populations

Measurement:

Planning grants to organizations focusing in gap areas

Target: 1 planning grant

Strategy: Infrastructure

Develop programming elements that enhance organizational infrastructure as it relates to National Service, Community Engagement and Disaster Services in Utah

Activity: CE

Improve online mechanisms to easily connect the public to volunteer opportunities at community organizations

- Phase 1: Identify current best practices within sector/Begin conversation on options/Identify strategy moving forward/Development of Tool
- Phase 2: Outreach and promotion of new tool

Outcome:

Increase in organizations ability to recruit volunteers and public access to volunteer opportunities

Measurement:

Development of Statewide plan with the following targets:

- Number of organizations using system
- Number of individuals accessing system to search for volunteer opportunities
- Number of volunteer opportunities listed in system

Activity: CE

Support businesses in creating employee volunteer programs throughout the state

- Phase 1: Identify current best practices within sector &
- Phase 2: Development of tools/resources for business employee volunteer programs
- Phase 3: Outreach and promotion of benefits of employee volunteer programs & provide list of community organizations that might be willing to help them (United Way, connector organizations, other corporations)

Outcome:

Businesses engaged in corporate social responsibility at a greater level

Measurement:

Number of businesses engaged in discussions about employee volunteer programs

Target: 25

Activity: CE

Engaging Communities in Service

- Phase 1: Identify the municipalities that have a volunteer or community relations coordinator on staff and get their name and title
- Phase 2: Volunteer management needs survey of community volunteer coordinators/Evaluate and incorporate specific training for community volunteer coordinators

Outcome:

Communities recognize and utilize volunteers as an effective means of addressing community needs

Measurement:

Number of communities volunteer coordinators utilizing UServeUtah resources

Target: 20

Activity: CE

Create an avenue that encourages K-12 schools to incorporate Service Learning (SL) and/or youth service into their curriculum

- Phase 1: Creation of SL committee to explore options for engagement
- Phase 2: Work with appropriate entities to explore service as a graduation requirement in Utah public schools

Outcomes:

Improves students' academic learning through meaningful service experiences

Measurement:

Committee plan developed regarding options for Service Learning

Activity: NS

Work with the national alumni network to establish and build a strong AmeriCorps Alumni chapter in Utah

- Phase 1: Outreach to all former Utah AmeriCorps members/Identify potential leadership
- Phase 2: Work with identified leadership to explore alumni involvement and chapter development

Outcomes:

Alumni will be more actively engaged and will provide added support for AmeriCorps programs

Measurement:

Number of individuals actively engaged in Alumni chapter

Target: 10 member Alumni Chapter Executive Committee

Target: 100 AmeriCorps Alumni members

Activity: DS

As the lead organization for the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) Volunteer and Donations Coordination Team (VDCT), develop and implement clear roles and responsibilities for all organizations participating on team

- Phase 1: Develop and disseminate survey to current VDCT members to determine their buy-in, anticipated roles and schedules
- Phase 2: Train and Exercise VDCT members on tools used in statewide disaster
- Phase 3: Measure Understanding through surveying membership

Outcome:

Increased communication through relationships and partnerships with UServeUtah and other members of the VDCT within SERT

Measurement:

Written standard operating procedures for state VDCT

Objective 2: Promote and Inspire Statewide National Service and Volunteerism

Utah has a culture of volunteerism, but individuals need to be made aware of needs and occasions to serve. We are committed to creating ways for Utahns to identify and engage in quality volunteer and service opportunities

Strategy: Social Media/Marketing/Communications

Strategic use of social media, marketing, and communications to raise awareness of service and volunteerism in Utah as well as UServeUtah resources, initiatives and events

Activity: ALL

Development of UServeUtah Social Media/Marketing/Communications Plan which will include; calendaring, policies, systems of engagement, and metric baselines

Outcomes:

Strengthen UServeUtah brand and position as a resource for community organizations

Increased public awareness and support of National Service & volunteerism

Measurement:

Increase in social media followers as determined by baseline metrics

Number of press releases and media mentions

Target: 3-5 Stories/highlights posted on social media per week

Target: 3-4 news stories annually (print and/or TV)

Strategy: Educate/Advocate

Work to educate political, community and business leaders on the significance of National Service and volunteerism in the state of Utah

Activity: NS

Outreach efforts to increase understanding regarding impact of National Service programs in Utah

Outcomes:

Political, community and business leaders recognize the value of National Service and volunteerism to the state of Utah

Measurement:

Number of meetings with political, community and business leaders

Target: 1 meeting per month with members of the following: business leader; community leader; political leader; religious leader

Activity: NS

Presentations at commission meetings on National Service programs throughout the state of Utah.

Outcomes:

Increased engagement of commission members in national service and AmeriCorps programs

Measurement:

Number of program presentations

Target: 1 National Service program presentation per Commission Meeting

Survey of Commissioners

Target: 80% of Commissioners acknowledge increased knowledge of National Service

Activity: DS

Education efforts with community emergency managers about spontaneous volunteer management

Outcome:

Increased awareness within emergency management world of role of UServeUtah in disaster service

Measurement:

Number of emergency managers sending individuals or teams to participate in UServeUtah training and exercises

Target: 20

Objective 3: Recognize the Efforts of Outstanding Volunteers

Utahns are exceptional. They are willing to make the time, and the connections that come from reaching out in service to and with others. We are dedicated to recognizing and acknowledging individuals for their volunteer efforts

Strategy: Volunteer Recognition Certificate

Increase recognition of volunteers through increased use of the Volunteer Recognition Certificate throughout the State

Activity: ALL

Increase awareness for Volunteer Recognition Certificate among community organizations in Utah

Outcome:

Improve capacity of organizations to effectively recognize volunteers

Measurement:

Number of organizations requesting certificates

Target: 90

Number of certificates distributed

Target: 500

Strategy: Annual Volunteer Recognition

Recognize the efforts of exceptional volunteers in Utah via partnerships with other organizations and through UServeUtah annual recognition events

Activity: ALL

Development and implementation of annual recognition plan

Outcomes:

Greater awareness of exceptional volunteer efforts in the state

Measurement:

Number of UServeUtah or partnership events where individuals are recognized

Target: 4 events

Recognition certificate recipients (Service Champions) highlighted at Commission Board meetings

Target: 4 annually

CONCLUSION

This strategic plan conveys for the Commission and for our constituents an understanding of who we are, what we do, and the values by which we define ourselves. It outlines as well our vision and the three key objectives we believe we must meet in order to achieve that vision.

The plan does not reflect everything that UServeUtah hopes to do over the next three years; nor does it represent a binding set of directives, since the planning process must be fluid and flexible. It will, however, serve as the framework by which we will make decisions, focus our resources, and work to expand our reach in the service and volunteerism sector.

Ideally, a diverse array of stakeholders will also “see themselves” in this plan. It can be a tool to bring people, organizations and communities together in more strategic, integrated and collaborative ways in identifying common outcomes. We hope the plan will be a useful tool in supporting and guiding service and volunteerism in Utah.

The 2012 – 2014 Strategic Plan/State Service Plan will be executed through the oversight and evaluation of the Utah Commission on Service & Volunteerism. UServeUtah will coordinate and facilitate biannual meetings to evaluate progress toward the goals and objectives of the Action Plan. The UServeUtah staff will be responsible for the progress in meeting the plan objectives.